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THIRTY YEARS IN PORTO RICO

ARTHUR JAMES

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THIRTY YEARS IN PORTO RICO

A RECORD OF THE PROGRESS SINCE AMERICAN OCCUPATION

BY
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SAN JUAN
PORTO RICO PROGRESS
1927

To My
Father and Mother

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CHAPTER I

LOOKING BACKWARDS

The second voyage of Columbus while not as auspicious as the first, was in many ways, just as important. At the head of a great fleet he sailed majestically along the northern coast of Porto Rico, anxious, no doubt, to join his ill fated comrades he had left behind him. The ships needed fresh water however, and he sailed into the beautiful bay on the shores of which Aguada and Aguadilla are now situated. His search for water was short. One hundred yards from the beach an underground river belched forth. From this gushing cataract the water kegs were filled and the fleet sailed on to Santo Domingo.

Porto Rico is the only territory over which the United States flag flies which has had this personal and direct touch of Columbus. The Discoverer, however, never returned to the island, but ruled the Spanish Main from the adjacent island of Santo Domingo. There was one member of this first landing party who seemed to be greatly impressed by the beauties and possibilities of Porto Rico. This was the poetic warrior-explorer Ponce de León. He returned on a voyage of exploration, and was received hospitably by the islanders. His preliminary investigations and reports warranted Columbus granting him more men. Ponce de León was appointed first governor of Porto Rico. He established his headquarters in the neighborhood of San Juan and set about in the typical "conquistador" style of subduing and settling the country.

For many years the Spaniards were able to bamboozle the guileless natives that they were an immortal race. Under this deception much exploitation was accomplished with its attendant cruelties. Doubting Thomases arose, however, among the Indians and a council of war decided to test the theory. A luckless Spanish messenger by the name of Salcedo was chosen for the experiment. As he was bearing a message from San Juan to San Germán, the capital of the western end of the island, Salcedo was caught and held under the Añasco river until life was apparently extinct. The Indians then watched over his body until their belief in the immortality of the European was disabused by the unmistakable sign of decomposition. The result of this experiment served to stimulate the Indians. There were two or three formidable insurrections against the serfdom the invaders had imposed upon them. The Indians, though, with their simple weapons were no match for the Spaniards and in a short while the original inhabitants of the island were either killed off, or driven to the mountain fastnesses.

Spain's claim to Porto Rico was often disputed by the other European countries. At one time the Duke of Cumberland held the island for the British crown. Porto Rico might have been today a part of the British West Indies had not cholera so devastated the rank of the English that the Duke abandoned the place and the Spaniards drifted back. In the early years of its history, pirates, privateers, and freebooters harassed the island. Towns were burned and sacked along the coast. All the invading parties were driven off, including the great Sir Francis Drake. The last battle of this redoubtable sea rover was a vain attempt to capture the port of San Juan.

Attacks from foes and neglect by Spain caused Porto Rico, so thickly inhabited today, to have the appearance of a thinly populated wilderness during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Things brightened up, though, at the end of the eighteenth century. The actual or prospective revolution in her overseas possessions made Spain adopt a more liberal colonial policy. In 1815 Porto Rico became a Spanish colony in the true sense of the word. An epoch making degree was proclaimed which removed many of the racial and religious handicaps which had hitherto prevented foreigners from settling in the country. Beside Europeans many of the citizens of the new republics in the Caribbean area made their home in Porto Rico, evidently prefering the fleshpots of a royal Spanish colony to risking their lives and fortunes in the revolutionary countries to the South and West.

The nineteenth century brought Porto Rico before the eyes of the world on more than one occasion. In the first half of the century the pirates that infested these seas seemed to make their headquarters here. The depredations made upon the shipping world compelled the United States to take an active part in the suppression of the buccaneers. A fleet under Commodore Porter was sent to clean the seas. Porter did an effective job although on one occasion he almost involved his country in war with Spain. The Commodore was on the point of searching the Port of Fajardo when the Spanish officials of the protecting fort threatened to fire on his ships should they enter the port. There was no heroic reply on the part of Commodore—he simply sailed into the port and spiked the guns that had been turned upon him.

In the year 1870 Porto Rico became a Province of

Spain with the rights and privileges of a continental province. The greatest advantage of this act was that Porto Rico could elect delegates to the Spanish Cortes. One of the first things these colonial representatives did was to stir up sentiment in favor of the abolition of slavery. On March 22, 1873 the entire slave population, 34,000, was liberated. For this piece of humane legislation, Porto Rico is justly proud. As one of her commissioners to Washington has said. "Porto Rico is the only country that has liberated her slaves voluntarily and deliberately by the will of her own people".

Just before the Spanish-American war the Mother country granted Porto Rico a very liberal form a government. Without changing the number of representatives in the Cortes the island was given autonomy. An Insular Legislative Assembly with a cabinet of five Porto Ricans to act as a consulting board to the Governor was set up. It has always been a bitter pill to the patriotic Porto Rican that this system was never given a fair chance to work. It seemed to them that the goal of all their political agitation for a generation had been achieved, that without sacrificing the protection of their powerful motherland they had complete home rule. There are cynics, however, that insist that Spain, with her rather shady record in favor of self government, was compelled to make some such concession by pre-bellum pressure. It is a question that can never be solved and it no doubt will be a subject of discussion for many generations to come.

After an almost insignificant campaign so far as Porto Rico was concerned the Treaty of Paris closed the Spanish-American war. There was no animosity on the part of the Porto Ricans towards the northern invaders. The

Spanish soldiers were brave, but even they did not seem to have much heart for the conflict. Many of these soldiers stayed in Porto Rico after the Peace was declared and in time became American citizens. Thirty years after we find the officer who represented Spain and the officer who represented the United States in the stirring ceremony when the keys of the historic city of San Juan were turned over to the conquerors, marching together in the Fourth of July procession; each at the head of his band of veterans. Under these tropic skies, Time, the great Healer, heals even more quickly than he does in the northern zone.

Shortly after the Occupation the island was visited by the most terrible hurricane of its history. Crops were destroyed, thousands were rendered homeless and the starving multitudes from the country flocked to the city for food. half believing that the cyclone was a visitation from God to punish the invader. America rose to her opportunity. Relief work was quickly organized and effectively administered. Uncle Sam's new nephews thus had an early opportunity of learning that whatever they might think of the political motives behind the Occupation the heart of Uncle Sam was in the right place.

It was not until 1917 that the people of Porto Rico became American citizens. The passage of the Jones Bill happily closed a period in the history of this island people that had been the cause of much discontent. Before this date the Porto Rican people were subject to the laws of the United States without the rights and privileges of citizens. So much was this true that a Porto Rican disgruntled at this condition could not become a citizen of another country because he had no country to forswear.

This is now past history and whatever questions the Porto Rican may have as to his future his present status is clear and unequivocal. The Jones Bill provided that if by a certain date the Porto Rican people had not indicated a desire that United States citizenship would be undesirable to them they would automatically become citizens. Only 288 out of a total population of 1,200,000 had any desire to remain outside the pale. All the rest seemed glad to take advantage of Uncle Sam's protecting arm. There are probably very few instances in the history of the world where a mass movement of this kind could be paralleled.

The Jones Bill provided that a plebiscite should be taken on the temperance question. To everybody's surprise Porto Rico voted herself dry by a two to one majority—the first Latin American country to board the water wagon. The passing of the eighteenth amendment took the enforcement problem out of the hands of the insular courts and placed it in the Federal Courts. Prohibition enforcement is peculiarly difficult in Porto Rico because in the first place the molasses from the big sugar factories give the chief ingredient to the poor man for his "Mamplé" while the proximity of the French, Dutch and English islands make the task of providing the upper classes with their wine and spirits not very difficult. The position of Director of Prohibition in Porto Rico is far from a sinecure.

Since 1917 Porto Rico has been making history, which, though it lacks the glamour of war and revolution has clearly demonstrated that the Porto Rican is qualified to the respect and confidence of the world. Statistics are not difficult to obtain showing the progress of the last

thirty years. More convincing, however, is the fact that the new system and program of government instituted by the American government has been so well developed and adapted by the Porto Rican—that today the natives of the island head most of the governmental departments, some of whom were appointed by the President of the United States. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Porto Rico is a product of his beloved Borinquen and receives the respect and affection of both Porto Ricans and continentals.

Furthermore, as a proof that the period of apparentiship is over is President Coolidge's recent statement to the effect that he saw no reason why a Porto Rican could not be appointed as Governor of the Island—a post that during the past 435 years has been held by either a Spaniard or a Continental American.

CHAPTER II

SOME PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Porto Rican is the embodiment of hospitality, courtesy and taet. The poorest peon in the eountry possesses a native soeial ease that is seldom found among Anglo-Saxons. The stranger ean always be sure of an unaffected weleome even to the most humble eountry hut.

This courtesy is not confined to the soeial life. It permeates and influences every phase of living. In the business world, for example, although the Porto Riean has few equals when it eomes to shrewdness, he does not depend upon the complieated effieieney systems of his northern brother. He has a way of ingratiating himself into the eonfidenee of his customer and establishing a personal friendship. Instead of a monthly statement, when he is in need of money, he will hand you a signed reeeipt. A more subtle method could hardly be devised to raise the neeessary cash. By way of contrast an American groeery store on the island prints some sueh legend as this at the bottom of its bills and statements: "This is not a bank. Bills are payable promptly the first of every month. Interest will be charged on all overdue aecounts at legal rate." This method no doubt works well with the American elientele whieh the store serves, but it will not work with the Latin element. If the Amerieau business man is sineere in his desire to win the confidence of Latin America from a eommereial standpoint he must, as other nations have already done, accommodate himself to this element of courtesy.

The courtesy of the Porto Rican often runs to the extremity—and outcome of exaggeration. We must not take him too literally. On the announcement of his new-born babe will appear the startling statement, "He is yours." Express the slightest interest in a thing and the proprietor will tell you that you are welcome to it, even though it be the house which has lodged him and his family for generations. One of the favorite stories both among the Porto Rican and the resident Americans is that during a visit to the home of a cultured Porto Rican, a northern tourist expressed his admiration on a beautiful picture—an heirloom of the family. With his customary courtesy, the host made the formal reply that the picture was the property of his guest. The literal American, however, took his friend at his word and next morning sent a man to bring away his newly acquired work of art. Needless to say the man returned empty-handed, but with a positive opinion as to the prosaic nature of the northerner's make up.

Another marked characteristic of the Porto Rican is his love of the beautiful. This trait manifests itself in every walk of life. It is seen in the language itself—the chief index of the life and feeling of a people. Good Spanish is not so much a matter of good grammar as it is "the way it sounds." Art for art's sake means a great deal to the Porto Rican. Far removed from the great metropilitan centers, the women of the inland towns appear in dresses of the latest Paris and New York styles which some native dressmaker has made from a picture in a current magazine, without either patterns or instructions.

An outstanding need is direction for this artistic sense. Where it does not have direction and where the artistic

sense is not tempered by the practical we oftentimes get a pitiful affectation and much useless labor. A girl will work for months on a piece of drawn work and will shed innumerable tears because she cannot dispose of her work on account of the poor quality of the cloth on which she has put her labor. The cabinet maker, not content with the native beauty of the mahogany, cedar or satin wood will, unless he has very specific instructions to the contrary, work days and weeks carving these woods in imitation of some piece of cheap States furniture that may take his eye. Where work of this nature has had the oversight of a trained teacher it results in that type of beauty characteristic of the Spanish-Moorish civilization.

The Porto Rican shares with his other Latin American brethren his characteristic idealism. In this respect we can note one of the chief differences from the more practical northerner. The South American possesses a fine idealism, but he seems to lack the ability to put his ideals into reality. This trait is offset by a fatalism which so often saps his energy and initiative. The constitutions of some of the Latin American Republics surpass even the work of Thomas Jefferson in their advocacy of justice and brotherhood; yet in many of these countries we find a revolution with almost every rainy season.

It is refreshing to find a people whose standard of success is not accumulation of material property, and who will put up with all kinds of political inconvenience provided they are able to live in comfort with family and friend; yet, on the other hand, it is disappointing to see so few native leaders develop. Of good ideas and theories there is no dearth, but the will to put them into effect is lacking. It is the absence of this practical side of their

nature that justifies the Anglo-Saxonized courses of study in the educational institutions. Whatever weakness the people may have along these lines, the right training has done much to offset it, as is evidenced in the trained, native ministry and public school teacher.

The Porto Rican has a decided taste for purely intellectual questions. At a railroad station, in the drug store, or wherever men are wont to congregate we are always sure of a keen discussion on any religious or philosophical question if we but take the trouble to start it. An appreciation for the abstract seems to be inherent with these islanders. A teacher in the first year high school had finished a course in Franklin's Autobiography. In quizzing a fifteen year old freshman on this pragmatic book as to what he liked best about it, the teacher was startled with the reply "the author's philosophy of life." This was her first experience in teaching on the island. Later she was not so much surprised to find that over 90% of the same class elected "Sin and penance" as a subject to write on, following a study of the "Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner" when they might have chosen, "The plot of the story," or some such subject.

Manual training and similar branches in the school curriculum are popular, but they do not answer the purpose for which the emphasis has been placed on them in the course of study. It is probably just as difficult now to get a fairly well educated young Porto Rican to take up some form of manual work for his livelihood as it was twenty years ago. Recently a missionary was instrumental in putting one of the island adolescent in touch with an American—the object of the boy being to go to the States to follow this man's line of business. In the course of his

correspondence, the boy was very careful to state that he did not need the ordinary ground-work of the American youth; but that he was quite willing to do anything that would call forth the diplomatic ability for which the Latin race was noted!

With all this intellectual interest, the Porto Rican can hardly be said to be up to date in his philosophy. He is a follower rather than a leader in this direction. The greatest opponent of the evangelical religion today is not so much Roman Catholicism as it is the kind of free thinking that swept the United States more than fifty years ago. The great modern and purifying philosophies of Bergson and Eucken do not seem to have found these people yet. It is to be hoped that their insular position will not permanently keep these forces out.

It is doubtful if there is a more kind and generous person to be found anywhere than the Porto Rican. In spite of the abject poverty of a large percentage of the population orphan asylums and similar institutions do not seem to flourish. If one or both parents die, the children are divided among the neighbors to share the trials and fortunes of another meager existence. During the war all philanthropies connected with the conflict were enthusiastically supported. People who had never given to anything outside their town oversubscribed to the Red Cross and in Liberty Loans—often without a clear knowledge of what the money was for or where it was going. One incident which occurred in an interior country district will serve to show the spirit of the people. A planter was approached to subscribe his share of liberty bonds. He had been used to the periodical swindles of Spanish days, but could not be thought to be ungenerous. He subscribed for

$500.00 worth of bonds, but even after he had the United States' receipt he firmly maintained that the money would not reach San Juan, the capital of the island, much less the boys on the western front. We have not seen him since he has been clipping his coupons, but certainly he must be one of a great company whom the fair treatment on the part of Uncle Sam has convinced that there is at least one government which does not exploit their generosity.

Like all good traits these of generosity and sympathy have their abuses. The hundreds of professional beggars that infest the island thrive principally because it is easier to make an immediate appeal to the Porto Rican, than it is for the reformer to appeal to his sense of social justice with its more remote alleviation of the trouble. These mendicants make their rounds twice a week and receive food and money from their clients. It is a good business to those who play the game well and many of the parasites prosper. One well known beggar whose principal assets are cataracts on both his eyes has supported a large family and is now owner of a small farm which he has bought from his "earnings." He frequently receives alms from his wife as she comes from mass in her finery! A mission doctor a few years ago offered to remove the cataracts from his eyes so that he might resume his former occupation as carpenter. *He firmly refused this help with a string of belligerent language and charged the missionary with the offense of seeking to take away his employment!*

Mendicancy has been the object of many attacks, but it persists in spite of all agitation. The remedy must come from the island itself. Should the American interfere he would be regarded as cold-blooded. It is gratifying to note, however, that the Porto Rican is meeting with suc-

cess in the suppression of this custom. The victorious compaign against the liquor traffic and the successful fights against social impurity and kindred vices are striking at the root of the evil.

We may write of these various characteristics, yet after all they are but manifestations of a more fundamental difference between the Porto Rican and the North American. These islanders, like the rest of their race are fundamentally emotional while the continental is unemotional. By his virtues and his vices, we find that the Porto Rican is far more influenced by the great emotional instincts of life,—love, hate, fear, joy and sorrow than the American. They are an impulsive people. In one small town there have been within a year, three attempts at assassination, two of which were successful. In one instance an infuriated brother sought to give expression of his disapproval of his sister's sweetheart by shooting him as he came from the theatre. A second case was that of a young man who shot and killed his best friend over a dispute as to the merits of their revolvers. The other case was that of a boy who fatally stabbed his opponent in a game of dominoes in which a wager of three cents was at stake.

It need not be said that this emotional nature has its outlet in other ways than in gruesome incidents such as these. It is responsible for their social ease, for their love of the beautiful, for their idealism, for their generosity and sympathy. It is this element in their nature that has made the Spanish type of courtesy the standard of all polite conduct, "out of the heart, come the issues of Life."

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE

The most recent estimate of the population of Porto Rico is 1,500,000 and the composition of the population as 60% white, 35% mulatto and 5% negro. Most of the whites are descended from Spanish colonists. In politics or in business, the amount of color a person may have is no drawback. In the lower classes, where there is no ambition for a social career, intermarriage between the white and the black is of frequent occurrence. There is no law, or even a positive opinion against the practice. In the higher states of society, there is a well-defined color line; intermarriage of the races is strictly prohibited by custom. Membership in the casino and other recreational institutions is denied the man of color.

Porto Rico is the Spanish for "Rich Port". Its natural wealth attracted the Spanish colonists of the 16th century. Today, from many points of view, the name is still descriptive of the island. The budget for the present year is a bigger budget than twenty-three of the States of the Union. The borrowing capacity of the island is $33,000,000.

In spite of these facts, poverty and its attendant evils are very pressing problems. All the wealth of the island, we are told, is in the hands of 15% of the population and in spite of such a good trade balance the pre-war per capita wealth of the island was $182 compared with a per capita wealth in continental United States of $1,123 and of $1,442 in Great Britain. Ten cents a day is the estimated

per capita Porto Rican wage. Doctors Ashford and Gutiérrez who, since the Occupation have done such valiant service in the eradication of Uncinariasis, the "hookworm", know intimately the countryman, or "Jíbaro" of Porto Rico who comprises such a large proportion of the population. They give this description of the daily diet of this unfortunate class:

"He rises at dawn and takes a cocoanut dipperful of 'café puya',—coffee without sugar. Naturally, he never uses milk. With this black coffee he works until about twelve o'clock, when his wife brings him his breakfast, corresponding to our lunch. This is composed of boiled salt codfish, with oil; and has one of the following vegetables of the island to furnish the carborate element; banana, plátano, ñame, batata, or yautía.

"At three in the afternoon he takes another dipperful of coffee, as he began the day. At dusk he returns to the house and has one single dish, a kind of stew, made of the current vegetables of the island, with rice and codfish. At rare intervals, he treats himself to pork, of which he is very fund, and on still rarer occasions he visits the town and eats quantities of bread, without butter, of course.

"Of all this list of country foods there are only three elements that are bought—rice, codfish, and condiments. Rice is imported from the United States and codfish from Nova Scotia. The bread he eats on his visit to town is made of American flour...

"Only a few cents difference in wages will cut out the small proportion of animal proteids he obtains, the codfish, and a cyclone will drive him in desperation to the town."

Many have been the remedies brought forward to relieve this distressing poverty. The more recent, that of emigration, has received a great deal of attention. Dr. Fleagle, formerly dean of the University of Porto Rico, and a keen student of the social life of the island, writing of this method says that Porto Rico could support twice the population that she now has with comparative ease, providing some means is found to relieve the economic situation of the greater part of the people and to prevent the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a comparative small number.

Of the other proposed solutions, the elimination of the absentee landlord and the establishment of a system of small farms in the place of the great plantations that now exist and dominate the agricultural life of the island has strong adherents. Many of the best friends of the island see in this peasant proprietorship with a system of rural co-operation similar to that of Denmark, the salvation of the island from the pall of poverty. It is probably the best solution offered, but the Porto Rican is notoriously individualistic and the co-operative part of the scheme is likely to fail unless it is preceded by years of education and experiment.

One of the outstanding results of the American Occupation of Porto Rico is the bridging of the gulf that divides the extremely wealthy from the peon classes. The creation of a middle class seems to be one of the contributions of the Anglo-Saxon to the social life of the island. The personnel of most of the distinctively American institutions consists of members of the "Segunda Clase", people, who, before the occupation, were without any social standing and are now teaching in the public

schools, occupying government offices and preaching in many of the evangelical pulpits. In this new democratic arrangement, there are many instances where this virile element of Porto Rican life has thrust the so-called "primeras" from places of responsibility which family and wealth had given them for centuries.

It has been said that the English word "home" has no equivalent in the Spanish language. In its larger meaning, this may be true but whatever significance this fact has in the Spanish character the family and family life has as great a part in Hibernian civilization as in our own.

For the honor of his family the Porto Rican will make any sacrifice. There are dozens of young men in Porto Rico today who were trained in the States and had started in some promising professional career; yet they quit their profession to return to the land of their birth in order to satisfy one or both parents who could not be separated from their "niños".

If one is a member of a "buena familia"—a good family—he is likely to be forgiven a multitude of sins and weaknesses. What the family wealth will do for the prodigal in the States, the family name will do for the Porto Rican scapegoat. Quite recently within the writer's notice, a member of one of the most honored families in the community committed what, under other circumstances, would have been an unpardonable breach of etiquette. He drank too much of the forbidden juice, and in a drunken drive insulted his host at a ball. The matter was hushed up and the fellow is apparently in as good a social standing as before all because of his "buena familia".

In a recent church entertainment in assigning the parts, the Porto Rican director paid more attention to the families of the actors than she did to their dramatic ability, evidently with an eye to the box office receipts and to future criticism of the play.

According to the census of 1910, 16% of the males and 15.7% of the females were consensually married. That is, one-sixth of all the people over 15 years of age are living together without the benefit of a civil or ecclesiastical marriage. In a recent social survey conducted by the Presbytery of Porto Rico out of families visited 18% reported that they were living together without the sanction of marriage. In some centers, the percentage went as high as 38%.

There are two reasons advanced that are supposed to be responsible for this state of things. The first is the loose living of the Spanish colonists. Unlike our Pilgrim fathers who came to America with their families, these Spaniards were mostly adventurers who left family ties behind them and entered into this consensual marriage with the native women. Because of the lack of moral resistance of the partially civilized islanders this practice became an accepted custom. The other reason advanced is that of the extortionate and prohibitory fees charged by the Church. In war days the draft laws sent thousands of couples to the priest, minister and magistrate to legalize their unions, in order to qualify for the government allotments in case the men were called to the colors.

The most deplorable phase of these unions is that the children who are born are denied a real home. In the

eyes of the law, there is the "natural" child, and the illegitimate child. The "natural" child is a child born out of wedlock but recognized and registered by the father. This child has a legal standing. The father supports it and grants it a minimum percentage of his estate. As a rule the child lives with its mother. Later should the father marry, the natural child has the humiliation of seeing his half brothers and sisters enjoying social recognition and prestige in which he too ought to share. As one of the native legislators in advocating better and fairer laws for the natural child has said: "The natural child abandoned by its father needs the law to protect him more than the legitimate child, because society rejects him. If it accepts him at all it is on an inferior level when referring to his rights. Frequently his father turns his back upon him and pretends that he does not know him."

The illegitimate child is another outcome of these loose sexual relations. The last census figures gives the number of illegitimate children in Porto Rico as 155,249, a slight decrease over the previous census. The evil results of illegitimacy in Porto Rico are the same as elsewhere. Many of the children are abandoned by both parents and owing to lack of sufficient orphanages and children's homes, it is estimated that today there are 10,000 homeless children on the Island under twelve years of age. The children live on what they can earn, beg or steal. They sleep in the waiting room of a railway station, in the comfortable branches of a tropical tree, or on the porch of some residence. They are entirely illiterate and form the class from which come the beggars and thieves. "They constitute a danger to the community, and if it were not for the relatively high death rate that is found

among people of this class, the island would soon be overrun by citizens brought up under these criminal-forming conditions."

In the abandon of their play we are much more likely to get a true perspective of Porto Ricans than in their more self-conscious moments. "Palms, Patios and Plazas" has been used to describe Cuba. For the recreational life of Porto Rico, although at the sacrifice of the alliteration, we could substitute "Casinos, Plazas, and Fiestas".

The Casino is the apex of the social life of the Island. Every town, even though it be not more than a group of huts in the mountain, will maintain its casino. To be a member of this group is the social ambition of the youth of the town. It is however exclusive, by reason of its color line and by its prohibitory fees, and is really the only institution in the Island's social life that does not recognize the social equality of the negro. In spite of protests from one or the other excluded parties the casino maintains its exclusive feature and sets the pace for the smart set of the community.

There is no parallel or counterpart in Anglo-Saxon life to the plaza in Spanish-American life. What the casino is to a selected class, the plaza is to the masses. It is the real community center. When night falls the boys and girls, young men and maidens, husbands and wives congregate in the plaza or public square of the city. The older people sit on the side and chat, while the young folks begin to parade; the girls circle one way and the young men the other. So great is the power of custom and so carefully chaperoned are the young ladies that if a girl should circle with a young man it would be almost tantamount to an engagement. Then would follow the

balcony flirtation, the serenade, and the formal betrothment. Within a year or so, this girl will be seated at the fringe of the procession watching her sister take a similar step. How do these girls so closely chaperoned ever get an opportunity to express a preference for their "novios"? These difficulties vanish with one's acquaintance with these people. Love laughs at locksmiths and at chaperones in Porto Rico as elsewhere. As Professor Ross has recently said: "It is needless to point out that without opportunity of speech the young people become marvelously skilled in the language of the eyes. What a señorita looking over the edge of a fan can express with her dark eyes would rouse a poet from the dead."

The fiesta is another thing that is essentially a part of the Porto Rican life. It is something more than a social gathering; it is a state of mind that grasps at any excuse to turn from the serious things of life to the more entertaining. Hardly a week passes that does not have a holiday or some saint's day to celebrate. Nothing brought about by the American Occupation was so unanimously adopted by the Porto Ricans as the American holidays. George Washington meant nothing to the simple mountaineers, but the 22nd of February was an important fiesta of the "Americano", and so now with vim they celebrate the birthday of the "American patron—Saint George!"

Christmas day in Porto Rico did not mean much to the children. The youngsters have their festival on the 6th of January, Three Kings Day. This holiday celebrates the coming of the Wise Men. Before retiring the children will fill baskets with grass and place them in conspicuous places so that the Wise Men in their search for

the infant Jesus will see them and in return for fodder for their beasts, will leave presents for the children. The coming of Santa Claus with the Americans did not oust this custom by any means; he was welcomed as an additional friend and now these two days as well as New Year's are duly celebrated. It does not have to be emphasized that the religious significance of the fiesta is very great.

One might think that to this fiesta-loving people America could not introduce much in the way of amusement. In this direction, however, we have made one of the most notable contributions to the life of the people. The Porto Rican when it comes to team work is lacking in what the Anglo-Saxon considers the first element of a good sport. Prof. Ross in his *South of Panama,* quotes a British diplomat "who knows the continent from Panama to Patagonia" as saying, "Distrust is universal here. No South American will put his faith in another South American." In his sport the end is likely to justify the means. A little cheating is all right, if you are not found out. American base ball has done more to rectify this fault than perhaps any other factor. The public school has been the great agency in teaching the national game. It is now impossible to go into the remotest "barrio" and not find a base ball diamond. As one travels through the country on a Sunday, he frequently comes across an excited crowd yelling themselves hoarse. The English words "Foul", "Play ball", "Strike" will arise from a jargon of incomprehensible Spanish.

Porto Rico, small as it appears on the map, is one of the largest sugar producing countries in the world. This on the surface would indicate an economic prosperity for

the island but the real facts reveal a most desperate struggle for existence for at least 85% of the population.

The cultivation, manufacture and exportation of sugar is responsible for the favorable balance of trade that always greets any investigator of the industrial status of Porto Rico. It is this fact that gives the appearance of prosperity to the island. The truth about this trade balance is that the money made in the sugar business is made by outside investors. Little but the meager wages of the laborers stay in Porto Rico. The huge profits go to the Continent, the marketing is for the most part done abroad, and even the banking in many cases is transacted in New York City. Porto Rico suffers from Absentee Landlordism in its acutest form.

No good is done by sentimentalizing about the situation nor belaboring the sugar corporations, which, after all, are the result of economic laws and not the cause of them. All friends of Porto Rico agree that the needed adjustment would come with the establishment of new industries, thus absorbing the large surplus of employable Porto Ricans. Porto Rico offers several advantages to the prospective investor. It is, in the first place, American territory and is free from all tariff restrictions in its relations with the mainland; it is in the tropics and is able to produce much of the necessary raw material for manufacturing purposes; it has an abundance of intelligent labor.

It is not the purpose of this booklet to enter into a detailed examination of the industrial opportunities of Porto Rico. This phase of the subject will be much bettered handled by the enterprising Chamber of Commerce and Economy Commission. One illustration will suffice to

show the opportunity that lies at this, the front door of the United States.

During the World War the New York Garment manufacturers found it impossible to obtain their needleework from Flanders and other European countries. They turned to Porto Rico with its immense population. These island people, without previous experience in this kind of work, adapted themselves so easily to the industry that the needlework now gives employment to tens of thousands of people. In many places it is displacing Coffee as second in the list of exports. Last year the total business was represented by some $10,000,000. It is no uncommon sight to see every member of a family in some humble home working at needlework — the men doing their bit by drawing the threads for the drawn work and hemstitching!!

CHAPTER IV

RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

"In no other part of the world has the Catholic Church been so protected as in South America," says Prof. Ross in his *South of Panama*. In practically all of these Latin countries, the Roman Church is supported by the State, and the Church controls and directs the educational policies of the State. Porto Rico was probably the most immune of any of these countries to Protestant influence. If the Catholic Church ever had an opportunity to prove its saving power it was in this island. From 1493 to 1898 —over 400 years—it had no competition. With the single exception of a small Episcopal Church for the English colony in the city of Ponce, no other religious body but the Roman Catholic Church was permited to work among this island people.

The effect of this isolation, this "closed shop" policy, may be fairly judged by the statements of Father Sherman, son of General Sherman and chaplain to the American army of occupation in Porto Rico. To a Catholic paper he writes, "Porto Rico is a Catholic country without religion whatever. The clergy do not seem to have any firm hold on the native people, nor have they any lively sympathy with the Porto Ricans or Porto Rico." In his report to General Brooke he said, "Now that the priests are deprived of government aid, many are leaving the country. The Church was so united with the State and so identified with it in the eyes of the people that it must share the odium with which the Spanish rule is commonly

regarded. The sacrament of confirmation has not been administered for many years in a great part of the island. Religion is dead on the island."

So far as statistics can bear any light on the subject, about 50% of the people are nominally Catholic, though the Church claims 60%. Membership in the Catholic Church, however, is quite a different thing from membership in the Protestant Church. If a person has been baptized in infancy, that person from the standpoint of Rome is a member of the Church. The life he subsequently leads has little to do with his church affiliation. A comparison of the Catholic and Protestant churches by membership, then, would be very misleading. The Protestant churches, whose membership is the result of a mature decision and is supposely dependent upon a moral life, need a different basis of comparison. A more fair method of judging the influence of these two religious organizations was inaugurated a few years ago. In a large section of the island the people who attended the Catholic and Protestant churches were enumerated and it was found that on this Sunday, the Catholic Church held 80 services in towns with an attendance of 7,731 persons and eight services in the country with an attendance of 363 persons, a total attendance for the Catholics of 8,094. On the same day, and in the same district the Protestants held 70 services in towns with an attendance of 4,796 while in the country they held 102 services with an attendance of 4,074, a total for the Protestants of 8,870. Had the census not stopped with attendance at Sunday services, but continued through the week the result would have been a great deal more favorable for the Protestants. For in the eighty towns and centers enumerated there would easily have been fifty Pro-

testant services each day of the week while the Catholic midweek services — unless there is a special fiesta — are practically nil.

From an evangelical point of view the principal reason that Roman Catholicism falls short of ministering to the spiritual needs of the Porto Rican is because of the superstitious practices it sanctions in the name of religion. The Catholic Church in Porto Rico has always opposed anything in the way of popular education and consequently ignorance and superstition have for four centuries prevented the creation of an enlightened public opinion. During the recent series of earthquakes, even the American priests led the rogativas—candlelight processions—to appease the wrath of the Devil who was said to be the cause of the disturbances. In many places the priests explained that the earthquake came as a result of anti-Catholic propaganda. In one city in particular, where the damage had been exceptionally heavy the American priest insisted that the people of the town had brought it on themselves by persisting in the removal of his predecessor for grossly immoral conduct. At the ancient town of Aguadilla, where the tidal wave did so much damage and where the Catholic Church was demolished, the priest hit upon the plan of placing the Patron Saint of the town on the balcony of a house facing the sea. So great was the power of this effigy that in spite of shocks and rumors of shocks, the sea did not invade the town again!

On Palm Sunday, the natives flock to town and to mass bringing their palm branches with them. So great is the demand for the palm branches that even the Protestant minister's cocoanut palms are likely to be injured by his

good Catholic friends begging too many branches! At the church, the priest blesses the branches and the people take them home and place them in front of their houses to protect the domicile against lightning. Usually the branches are beaten down by the first heavy storm.

When the young manhood of the Island was called upon for military service in the past war, instead of devoting themselves and their energy to some more practical occupation, the ultra Catholic women of the Island made "Corazones de Jesús"—Hearts of Jesus. This piece of needlework was to prevent any bullet reaching the soldiers. In as much as the Armistice was signed two days before the boys had been ordered to leave for France, it may be presumed that the women now claim that their badges were effective in "keeping the bullets away."

From 10:00 A. M. of the Thursday of Holy Week until the same hour on Saturday is a peculiarly sacred time for the Catholics of Porto Rico. This time does not simply commemorate the death of our Lord, but to them Jesus is actually dead again and in his tomb. The absurd consequences of such a belief indicate the depth of the superstitious mire into which the Catholic Church in Porto Rico has been plunged. To Porto Rican Catholics not only is the Lord again dead but the whole physical world suffers the pangs of death with Him. Should a person do anything in this period that is not authorized by the Church, he will be doing it to the very body of Christ. Manual work is, of course, tabooed. The poor of both town and country, if they be devout Catholics, must quit their work, for should even a nail be driven to make their rickety huts more secure, they would be driving it into the very body of the Master.

Cases that illustrate this superstitious nature of the Catholic Church in Porto Rico might be multiplied ad infinitum. They would only prove that which is evident to the casual observer of religious conditions in Porto Rico —the need of a religion where reason and feeling are so blended that in avoiding superstition a cold intellectualism, an intangible mysticism is not established.

Again, the Catholic Church in Porto Rico is anti-social. The whole hierarchical system is opposed to our modern democratic view of looking at things. To the native, the Catholic Church is the greatest supporter of the caste system that dominates the Island. When a family of some note is interested in the Protestant faith, the greatest argument that the priest thinks he can bring to bear on them is, "Only the poor people are Protestant." He is greatly perplexed when this line of reasoning does not have the desired result. That which is our greatest glory is, from the Catholic point of view, our most vulnerable point. The fact that every spiritual revival, alike in Catholic and Protestant Churches, has had its origin among the lowly seems to have been forgotten by the Porto Rican Catholic protagonists.

This anti-social nature is shown particulary in movements like Prohibition and the Social Purity campaigns. For such movements the Catholic Church shows either an active opposition or a total indifference.

Even in sacramental matters, the Catholic hierarchy shows this same diffidence to the artificial lines of cleavage in the social life of the people. It is no uncommon thing for the Protestant minister to have some poor ignorant woman bring him her child to be baptized because

the priest has refused to do so since she has not enough money to pay the minimum fee.

In funeral services for the peasant who can pay only a few cents, the priest will mumble a few formularies in the church; for those who can pay a little more, he will take them to the door of the church; with others higher up in the social and financial scale he will walk down the steps of the church; for *la buena familia,* however, he and his assistants in their finest regalia will go to the graveyard with the cortege.

The Catholic Church in Porto Rico does not seem to have awakened to the fact that we are living today in a democratic world and that the surest, if the slowest, way to get even political power is to work with the masses. The church, however, plays the game as it did in the time of king and court. If the energy that is used in San Juan, the capital of the island, by the Catholics to pick some political plum or to curry favor with some political appointee were spent in the bettering of the social and moral conditions of the island, Porto Rico would be a far more wholesome place than it is at present.

A traveler in a Latin land or a student of any Latin literature is bound to be impressed by the occurrence and recurrence of religious phrases. If the phrases convey the same idea as they do to the Anglo-Saxon, the traveler or student may rightly assume that either the people are a very religious or a very profane people. That these expressions have very little to do with their spiritual life is one of the first conclusions of the permanent resident in these lands.

Professor Ross in his travels through South America tells of seeing the "Butcher Shop of the Holy Spirit"

over a meat shop, of reading an advertisement for "The Wine of the Last Supper," and of another announcement of a new brand of cigarettes with the twelve disciples puffing away at them and Judas remarking, "If I had had this kind of cigarette to smoke, I never would have betrayed Him."

The American influence in Porto Rico has to a great extent done away with this crudeness, yet a newly arrived missionary will be greeted by his compatriots in business or government service by a felicitation that the language will not be hard for him to learn because half the words are cuss words for which the missionary will have no use. A thorough study of the Spanish language and nature would indicate that there was no such thing as swearing. "Ave María Santísima" which would literally mean "Hail Most Holy Mary" is translated in a recent grammar as "Good gracious." When a Porto Rican cannot express his indignation by the ordinary vocabulary and gesture, he has no cuss words on which to fall back—he simply explodes.

All of this indicates a most difficult phase of the missionary's work. He has to engender into the sacred words and phrases which are bandied about in ordinary conversation a meaning similar to that held by the evangelical Christian in other parts of the world.

The usual penance inflicted by the Catholic priest on one of his flock who has visited the missionary's house is to have him repeat the Lord's prayer over a number of times, the number depending on how many times the offence has been committed. The speed with which these "Padre Nuestros" are rattled off and the fun the miserable offenders have in racing through them are only

paralleled by the absolute lack of any spiritual aid they expect to receive from the exercise.

Even the names of these people make the missionary's task more difficult. Often a child is named for the patron saint of the day on which he was born and in addition will usually have some Biblical cognomen added. Popular names for the girls are Resurrección, Concepción, Asunción. During the first few months of the writer's stay in Porto Rico he was engaged in the erection of a mission building in a mountain town. The chief carpenter's name was Jesús while his peon's name was John the Baptist. The new missionary never could get used to sending John the Baptist to look for Jesús even though the Spanish pronunciation helped a great deal. He had to invent nicknames for the men.

The assignment of an original prayer is a favorite one among the Spanish teachers of the Island. "This kind of composition," they say, "lends itself to the Spanish nature." The productions that emanate from the pens of these Porto Rican adolescents are remarkable. Some of the prayers of the village scamp, who has not seen the inside of a church since he was baptized would, so far as lofty diction is concerned, compare favorably with the productions of the Church Fathers.

One form of belief that has greatly affected the religious life of the Island is Spiritism, the principal doctrines of which are:

1. A pantheistic idea of God, and that complete absorption with him is the goal of human endeavor.
2. That this absorption into the infinite is at the end of an indefinite number of reincarnations.
3. That salvation comes from good works—that the number

of reincarnations is determined by the good work one has to his credit.

4. That all will be eventually saved and consequently there will be no future punishment.

5. That there should be a respect for the Bible, and a belief in those parts which favor spiritism.

6. That Jesus Christ was one of the world's greatest teachers.

7. That there is spiritual healing of sickness by medicine prescribed by the good spirits.

8. That it is possible to communicate with the dead.

9. That Love should dominate all relations of this life, and that Light and Truth should be the aim of all those living on this plane of existence.

The government of the cult is very loose and simple. In every important town there are spiritualistic centers and these centers are grouped together in an insular association. There are but few professional preachers, or "orators," as they are called. This phase of worship is left to the prompting of the spirits during the session. There are of course mediums at every center—intermediaries between this material world and the spiritual one.

In a general way the Spiritists of Porto Rico may be divided into two classes. The intellectual and well-to-do, and the poor and ignorant. The first group are now, for the most part, reorganizing themselves into theosophical societies. The poorer members of this sect, and there are stretches of country and whole sections of towns where spiritism reigns,—practice the cult in its crudest forms.

That these forms of belief appeal to such a susceptible people as the Porto Rican is not at all strange. A clear cut distinction between the real and the unreal does not exist for the unsophisticated inhabitant. He will relate his dreams as if they were part of his conscious experience,

or he will repeat a neighborhood ghost story without the slightest doubt as to the historical accuracy of the legend.

In such a fertile field as this the propagator of a belief in which the communication with loved ones is the most distinguished feature has an easy task; especially when he assumes occult powers to heal the sick, to peer into the future and to restore lost property. Poor people will travel from all parts of the Island on foot to their favorite medium when they are afflicted with some malady. Should the medium fail to restore them, it will be due to some faulty spiritual connection, and should, by chance, the invalid recover his health the particular medium will claim all the credit, and her fame will go forth throughout the land as a successful intermediary.

The purely negative side of the religious life of Porto Rico is expressed in the rationalism and indifference of the Island.

The rationalists or freethinkers (l i b r e pensadores) theoretically believe in material conception of the universe. They profess to have nothing to do with anything that savors of the spiritual. Practically they have very little to show from a constructive point of view. As an organization they are small in numbers, but they have many semi-adherents throughout the Island. Judging from these periodical papers the efforts of the freethinkers are largely spent in exposing the abuses of the Catholic Church. The Protestants, however, come in for their share. Cheap Biblical criticism appears every week.

The "libre pensador" preach the philosophy with which Tom Paine clarified the atmosphere more than a century ago and with which Robert Ingersoll stirred the American nation last generation. Today we have neither a lifeless

Deism nor a deadening orthodoxy, at least in our evangelical world. In making the assumption that these former conditions hold good today, the rationalists are simply attacking men of straw of their own manufacture.

Those that are indifferent to any kind of religious appeal form the largest section of the population of the island. The shortcoming of the religion of their childhood has left many cold to any kind of religious appeal. It would only be fair to say that many are sincerely puzzled and are seeking for light and guidance in their religious experience. It is among these honest doubters that the Protestant Churches do their most effective work.

CHAPTER V

HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

The death rate of Porto Rico is twice that of Continental United States. This striking fact has been the cause of much missionary and philanthropic work, as well as the incentive for most of the magnificent work of the Insular Department of Health.

The poverty of the people coupled with the scarcity of medical men make it impossible for a large section of the population to secure medical care. Hence many are driven to the accomodating Spiritualistic medium or some grosser form of superstition. Blood-poisoning and infections of various kinds are very common. For their cure the countryman will drink the soup of boiled ants' nests (comejen) and place on the infected part a mixture of olive oil, tobacco and nutmeg. Should the children of the family develop colds, the countryman will make bracelets of small unripe lemons and place them on the wrists of his children. For severe nervous diseases the ignorant farmer will take a watermelon, cut a hole in one end and place in it his rings and everything he has that passes as jewelry. He will then cut a smaller hole in the other end and catch the water as it passes through. This water when taken is supposed to quiet the distraught nervous system.

Half of the deaths occur among children under five years of age. The number equals the death rate of all ages in Continental United States. According to the survey of the Interchurch World Movement the rate of infant mortality in Porto Rico exceeds that of India. This is not due

to the climate. There are no extremes of heat or cold, there are no sudden changes of temperature. It is an almost out of door existence for the youngsters. The conditions which contribute to this heavy mortality are poverty, ignorance, and lack of medical care. More medical care would soon sweep away the deadly ignorance with which child life is surrounded in this tropical Island, and check the many diseases transmissible from parent to offspring.

Tuberculosis ranks second in the mortality table. Again, so far as the Island itself is concerned, there is no reason why the White Plague should cause such ravages. Malnutrition, poverty, and ignorance have combined again to overbalance these natural advantages. In an investigation in the city of San Juan a few years ago, it was found that in one street twelve people out of every hundred died of tuberculosis.

Malaria is not a malignant disease but in Porto Rico it is a constant deterrent to the life of the Island. Although only a little over five per cent of the total mortality is attributable to malaria, few are the families which this malady has not attacked. Death rate and illness alone do not indicate the havoc wrought among the people afflicted As an economic handicap its effect has been shown by an investigation made by Dr. D. L. Van Dine in a large plantation in Lousiana which contained seventy-four tenant families with a total population of two-hundred and ninety-nine. From May to October, 1914, there were nine-hundred and seventy days of actual illness from malaria reported to a doctor. Forty-eight of the seventy-four families were represented. There were also many other cases not reported to the physician. Dr. Van Dine estimated that there were four-hundred and eighty-seven

work days lost by cases not reported. Three-hundred and eighty-five days were lost on the part of the adults who assisted in taking care of the sick. During this period there were six and a half days lost for every case of malaria.

The most prevalent disease in Porto Rico is the so-called "Hookworm." The investigating commission from the Rockefeller Foundation recently declared that the Island was "infested by hookworm." "There is more hookworm in Porto Rico than in any other country with the possible exceptions of India and Ceylon." Comparatively few deaths are attributable directly to this malady. Its results are seen principally in the social and economic life of the Island. The power of resistance of the person afflicted is reduced almost to nothing. The great tubercular death-rate for instance, is due largely to this enervating effect of "hookworm." Drs. Heiser and Grant of the Rockefeller Foundation in their report say:

"There can be no question that wide-spread uncinariasis infection is a serious menace to the economic life of Porto Rico and if the people of the Island are to keep pace with their competitors, it is necessary that this unnecessary burden be lifted from their shoulders. Even light infection with hookworm causes serious mental retardation. It is not too much to state that much of the money that is now being provided for schools is lost because of the defective mentality produced by the hookworm disease which renders the pupils incapable of assimilating instruction."

The time for another active and continuous campaign against hookworm is ripe.

In combating transmissible diseases, the Department of

Health has had conspicuous success. In different parts of the Island, there are special stations for the treatment of such diseases as tuberculosis, hookworm, and malaria. Against malaria and its mosquito, an active campaign is at present being carried on. The fight against the White Plague is also led by this Department, and although there is still a great deal of apathy to overcome on the part of the general public, much progress has been made. A few months ago $100,000.00 was raised by public subscription to augment the insular appropriation for a tuberculosis hospital. This hospital will consist of at least two hundred detached cottages. Each cottage to cost $3,000.00 and to accommodate four patients.

Although the fight against hookworm does not proceed with the same pace as it did during the first years of the occupation this enervating disease is being combated all over the Island. Stations for its treatment are operated in 37 different towns and during the year there were 20,590 cases treated. With the help this campaign is likely to receive from the Rockefeller Foundation, it is hoped that this disease will be stamped out.

Every town has its commissioner of health, its sanitary inspector, and its municipal doctor, working under the Commissioner of Health. However, the salary of the municipal doctor is so small that often he delegates his duties to a subordinate.

Prompted by a noble impulse, but without the necessary knowledge or money to maintain them, the municipalities built hospitals. Though nominally in charge of the municipal doctors these hospitals are quite often given over to the care of a "practicante"—a minor surgeon—and the sisters of the local Catholic Church, or convent. This is

the only recourse the common people have for hospital treatment. The only good that can be said of these municipal hospitals is that they are one or two degrees better than the miserable houses from which most of the patients come. They are used as a last resort and the attitude of the people to them is indicated in a recent Report of the Commissioner of Health. Speaking of the difficulties of getting patients to attend his special malaria hospital in the town of Barceloneta, the Commissioner said, "The stubborn and to a certain extent, natural resistance of the peasants to submit to medical treatment in the hospitals, can be explained by the fact that the hospitals maintained by the municipalities are generally in a deplorable condition, and the patient who is unfortunate enough to enter one for the first time firmly makes up his mind upon returning home not to avail himself again of this service. For this reason the physician in charge of the malaria hospital and the sanitary inspector were often compelled to request the *assistance of the police* to compel malaria patients to enter the hospital."

It was natural that this lack of medical care should, from the beginning, have touched the heart of the American. From the time of the Occupation the people of the United States through the government missionary effort, or through the great Health Foundation have sought to ameliorate the unfortunate condition of the sick folk.

Cooperating with the Health Department the Rockefeller Foundation has spent much time and money combating such diseases as Hookworm and Malaria. Sufficient time has not past to see the full effects of this work but in cleaning up sources of infection of both these diseases the

Foundation has made Porto Rico a healthier and happier place.

A most unique experiment is the School of Tropical Medicine recently established under the auspices of the University of Porto Rico and Columbia University of New York. These two universities share the expense of this undertaking. "The primary aim of the School of Tropical Medicine," says a recent announcement, "is to give the opportunity to study in a tropical environment the cause and prevention of that large group of disorders known as tropical diseases, and at the same time to observe the influence of tropical conditions on disease in general." This is the first school of its kind in the Americas. Who can predict the immense service it will render Porto Rico and the neighboring countries?

Beginning in a most humble way in the year 1901 the San Juan Presbyterian Hospital has developed into an institution that receives both the respect of the medical profession on the Island and the affection of the People of Porto Rico. Its influence is profound. In the most remote barrio it is known and referred to by the affectionate nickname of "El Presbiteriano." The last year's report states that 52,277 patients were treated during the year and in spite of a great deal of charity work $78,025 was received from these patients.

The professional standard of the Hospital will be seen in the fact that it is accredited by the American College of Surgeons—the first hospital in the West Indies to win this recognition.

The Congregational Churches of the United States in a similar manner heal the sick in Humacao. This hospital is doing excellent medical work among the sick in the east-

ern part of the Island. During the past year 19,194 patients have been treated. The staff of this hospital consists of three surgeons, thirteen graduate nurses, fourteen student nurses and an X-ray operator.

The coming of the Americans brought many innovations in the treatment of disease. None more marked than that of the trained nurse. In the old days the nurse was looked upon with disdain and nursing was often relegated to women who, besides having no preparation, were temperamentally and physical unfitted for the task. With the coming of the modern hospital and modern methods of surgery a group of some 200 registered nurses have been developed. These women are to be found in all parts of the Island and in many of the nearby countries. While in a way they are a by product of the new attitude towards sickness and healing they constitute one of the most powerful and effective results.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY WORK

Neither in the history of the United States, nor in the history of Latin America is there anything that will quite compare with the educational progress of Porto Rico since the American Occupation. Thirty years ago the school system was church ridden in its operation and mediaeval in its organization. Today it is the most free and democratic thing in the life of the Island.

When the Americans took possession, they found in most towns school boards composed of the Alcalde (mayor), the local priest, and the heads of three families. These local school boards had practically no funds at their disposal, and as a result teachers remained unpaid many months. The subjects taught were reading, writing, elementary arithmetic, catechism, and Spanish grammar. The classification of the pupils was left to the teachers, and as a rule there were only four grades in each school. As to the method of teaching, the invariable rule was for the student to learn by heart the textbook assignment, and the highest mark was given to the student who omitted the least words in reciting the lesson. "Corporal punishment, abnormal positions, and detention after school were the most common forms of punishment used." A good summary of the antiquated methods is given by Dr. Lindsey, the second Commissioner of Education under American rule:

"The work done under the Spanish school system scarcely constituted anything worthy of being called a school.

There was no uniform course of study, no attempt at rules, regulations, or order; no thought of the rights of the child; no endeavor to apply pedagogical principles or to furnish teachers with an adequate equipment for their work. A rural teacher lived with his family in the school house and did as he pleased with his pupils, frequently not teaching them at all himself, but hiring a substitute or delegating one of the older and brighter pupils to teach under his general instruction, while he drew his salary and sometimes absented himself from school for considerable periods. There were but two school supervisors for the entire Island and they made but one visit a year to each school, chiefly for the purpose of examining the pupils in the cathecism and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church."

	1898-99	1918-19	Increase
Population	953,243	1,263,474	310,231
Of school age	322,393	434,381	111,231
Attending school	*21,873	160,794	138,921
Of school age not in school	300,520	273,587	†26,933
Teachers	525	2,984	2,459
District supervisors	16	41	25
Rural barrios without schools	426	20	†406
Public school buildings	0	529	529
Rented buildings	All	1,195	...
Total school rooms	525	2,923	‡2,398
School expenditures	$288,008	$2,467,703	$2,179,605
For elementary schools	274,203	2,077,903	1,803,700
For high schools	0	128,306	128,306
For university	0	162,232	162,232
Expenditure per inhabitant	$0.30	$1,94	$1.64

Percentage of adult illiteracy:

1899	79.9%
1910	66.5%
1919	54%
1928	35%

* One report gives enrollment as 29,182.
† Decrease.
‡ Includes rented rooms.

The school system that is responsible for this remarkable development has been built up entirely during the past thirty years. In less than a generation the educational status of the island has been changed from a feudalistic system to one that compares very favorably with those of many of the States of the Union; from a time when educational advantages were enjoyed by a few to a time when they are deprived no child no matter how inaccessable his abode or how low his social position. For this development much credit must be given to the early pioneers in this field who, for the most part, came from the United States. For nearly a decade, however the direction of the Department of Education has been almost entirely in the hands of the Porto Ricans. The present Commissioner of Education, Dr. Juan B. Huyke, a native of Porto Rico, was appointed in 1921 by President Harding. In 1925 he was re-appointed by President Coolidge. His ideal of an education for Porto Rico is that both English and Spanish should be used with fluency by the rising generation in Porto Rico. By the undeviating insistance on this ideal Porto Rico is becoming more and more bilingual. Without in the least losing his beloved mother tongue the Porto Rican young man and woman has an immense practical advantage over the youth of the neighboring countries. Because of this fact the demand

for well trained Porto Ricans for the commercial life of these countries cannot be met.

A quarter of a century ago the foundations of the University of Porto Rico were laid. On these foundations the present institution has been built. The University has today over a thousand students and contains a College of Liberal Arts, a College of Agriculture, a College of Law, a College of Education, a College of Pharmacy. By means of these departments the University is powerfully affecting the life of Porto Rico. This influence is rendered even more potent by the relation it has recently affected with Columbia University in the establishment of the School of Tropical Medicine. Credit for the great strides of the University must be given Dr. Benner, Chancellor of the institution.

One of the greatest helps the Island of Porto Rico has received from outside sources in its efforts to reduce illiteracy has come from the Polytechnic Institute of Porto Rico located at San Germán. The Institute was founded in 1912 by Dr. J. W. Harris, a Presbyterian missionary. Its growth has been remarkable. Beginning with a handful of students there is an enrollment today of 400; beginning in a wooden shack it is today housed in ten modern reinforced concrete buildings whose value exceeds $700,000; beginning with grade instruction it has in less than fifteen years graduated its first class from its college of Liberals Arts. Recognition of the worth of the Institute came speedily, not only from the educational authorities of Porto Rico but also from such an organization as the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Learning. From this Foundation the Institute received a gift of $250,000 for its buildings and endowment.

The basic idea of the Institute is to give the young of Porto Rico a well rounded education—an education which takes into consideration the physical, the intellectual and spiritual phases of culture. It does this by its well equiped and well staffed class rooms and laboratory, its religious atmosphere and its insistence on the condition that every student regardless of the course he is taking be required to work at some manual occupation. The last condition is a distinct contribution to the educational life of Latin America and has been most helpful in dissipating the Spanish notion that a man or woman by soiling his hands became in some mystic manner uncultured. The young men of the institution help in the construction of the buildings, and roads and the young women help in the kitchen and laundry.

After twenty years in which the ministerial candidates of the various denominations were trained in small training schools, the Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, United Brethern, Christian, Disciples of Christ, and Presbyterian churches united in establishing the Evangelical Seminary of Porto Rico in which to train their young men for ministerial work. The Seminary is situated at Río Piedras and from its beginning has been under the direction of its present president, Dr. J. A. McAllister. Its enrollment has never been less than thirty three. It has trained students from every section of Porto Rico and from Venezuela, Colombia, Santo Domingo and Cuba. Four of the larger denominations each contribute a full Professor to the faculty. The Seminary by virtue of the fact that it is so near the University of Porto Rico is able to combine its work with that of this latter institution. Most of the graduates of the Seminary now arrange their work so

that they can finish their B. A. degree in the University by the time they graduate from Seminary.

In the training of the young Porto Rican for the ministry the Seminary has rendered indispensible help in manning the pulpits of the evangelical churches of Porto Rico. Whereas twelve years ago these pulpits were occupied by continental American ministers they are today all occupied by Porto Ricans who, for the most part have been trained in the Evangelical Seminary. The demand made upon the Seminary by Porto Rico, by the neighboring countries has definitely proved the wisdom of this union effort. Plans are prepared to provide new buildings that will more adequately house the Seminary.

The need for women workers in a missionary country with such a social composition as Porto Rico is as urgent as the need for men workers. The different denominations have trained these helpers in slightly different ways. The Baptist Missionary Society at Río Piedras, maintains "Villa Robles" a training school for women. The young women receive expert training under ideal home influences. Many young ladies have been graduated and are doing effective work in different centers on the island.

Feeling the need of a High School in their section of the island the Baptist last year opened such an institution at the mountain town of Barranquitas. All the students it can possibly accomodate are enrolled. This fact and the enthusiastic support of the community has greatly encouraged those behind this project.

In the early days of missionary work in Porto Rico the Congregational Churches of the United States established at San Juan the Blanche Kellogg Institute. For several years it has been under the wise direction of Mrs. A. B.

McGee. There are 75 girls living in the Blanche Kellogg Institute. These are pursuing a High School course that is accredited by the Department of Education and at the same time they are sharing in the refining influences of a Christian home atmosphere. The Blanche Kellogg has been called "The Mount Holyoke of Porto Rico" and fully deserves this compliment.

Impressed with the great number of parentless children in Porto Rico the Methodist Episcopal Church early established two orphanages. One of these orphanages is for girls and is situated in San Juan, the other for boys is situated at Hatillo. The San Juan Institution is directed by Mrs. J. C. Murray who has 82 girls under her care. These girls live and study in several well equiped buildings. At the completion of their studies the girls are sympathetically launched into the life of Porto Rico. Many of them prepare for the nursing and teaching professions. The Institution at Hatillo which has 40 boys in attendance does a similar work . The boys schooling is combined with an industrial training.

The Presbyterian Board of National Missions maintains in the most needy section of Mayaguez a Neighborhood House. This institution was established 25 years ago and from the beginning has been directed by Miss Clara E. Hazen. The establishment maintains a staff of 14 workers and its activities include a self supporting day nursery, a dispensary, a Kindergarten, a primary school, girls clubs and a training school for Presbyterian woman workers. All of the activities of the Marina Neighborhood House are coordinated with the work of the local Presbyterian Church and render a definite contribution to the welfare of the community.

The San Juan Y. M. C. A. was organized in 1909. It has a membership of 600. Its staff includes a General Secretary, a boys' work secretary a physical director. The Association is housed in a modern well equipped building which beside 28 bed rooms contains a gymnasium, a swimming pool, a reading room and opportunity under the right environment for the young men of San Juan to enjoy billiards and pool. The total budget of the association is $22,000 all of which is raised in Porto Rico. Mr. E. J. Simonds is the General Secretary of the Organization.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT THE MISSIONS ARE DOING

For the work of evangelization Porto Rico is divided into denominational zones of activities. At the outset of Protestant missionary work, each denomination was assigned a portion of the Island with the understanding that it would not encroach upon its sister denomination's territory. While this arrangement did not provide for organic union it prevented overlapping and duplication of effort.

The work of the American missionary has undergone a change in these twenty years of occupation. Porto Rico is an ideal example of "the church increasing and the mission decreasing." In the early days the entire church work was done by the continental missionary. As the work developed, it was more and more taken over by the native Porto Rican ministers. This process has been particularly marked during the last five years. The churches have become increasingly self-supporting while the young Porto Ricans who have been graduated from the Seminary have proved themselves worthy and acceptable leaders among their own people.

The native ministry is divided into two main divisions. First, the untrained but experienced pastors — who have worked by the side of the continental missionaries for some years, and have received their qualifications in the school of hard knocks. The other the trained pastors— the younger element, many of whom have not only received their schooling and special training in missionary insti-

tutions, but have been brought up from early childhood in the Church. Men of the first type have charge of some of the most important churches of the Island and their work speaks volumes of praise to the early continental missionaries. By virtue of youth and training the second type of worker is naturally coming to the fore as the years go by. Replacements in the important fields are almost always filled by the young men who have been under the observation of the various churches and missions through their boyhood and youth. Sooner or later this type of minister will dominate the situation.

The services of the Protestant churches in the cities in Porto Rico are similar to the services in the cities of the north—with one exception. There is no difficulty in Porto Rico in getting people to hear the Message for regular services, and for special services you may be sure of a full church. It is this phase of the work that appeals mostly to visitors from the north. They come expecting to find in the Protestant churches small groups of people brought together by all sorts of inducements. They are greatly surprised to see the enthusiasm, spontaneity, and interest of the Porto Rican in his church. Quite recently one of these visitors attended the prayer meeting of a church in an inland town and after the service she said: "The Wednesday before I left the States I attended prayer meeting at the First Presbyterian Church of————" (she mentioned one of the largest suburban churches of New York). "I counted the people and there were just the number you have here tonight." Shortly afterward a minister from a large Philadelphia church was invited to preach in this church. Rather reluctantly he consented and, through an interpreter, preached at a Mother's Day

service to an audience that crowded the church and to scores of people that were packed around windows and doors. Speaking of it afterward he exclaimed, "What a wonderful experience it was. It was the opportunity of a lifetime."

The greatest influence of the evangelical churches in Porto Rico is in the country. It is among the people of the rural sections, who form 80% of the population, that the Protestant churches have rendered greatest service and have found their greatest opportunity.

The country work is organized with the ideal of giving every inhabitant of the Island an opportunity of hearing the Gospel periodically. Many preachers make itineraries of several days' duration, visiting homes during the day and conducting services at night at some central house. From the seed sown in this manner come surprising harvests. The preacher is almost certain to be invited to repeat his visit and frequently a permanent preaching point results.

The country services of the evangelical churches are the only opportunity for worship the *jíbaro* or peasant has. In many instances people walk over ten miles each week across mountain and stream to some preaching center. Occasionally an incident like the following cheers the heart of a pastor. At Sabbath school in town Sunday morning the minister was surprised to see a man who for some time had been attending every meeting that had been held at a backward place some fifteen miles away. Barefooted he had walked this distance over mountainous paths and across raging rivers. He had come to ask the missionary to establish a permanent preaching point at his home, and to offer himself for membership in the church.

With such demonstration as this to prove the sincerity of his profession of faith he was received. Today he is a church officer, acting as an under-shepherd to a little band of Christians in that mountain recess.

The cottage service is very popular, and often is the only kind of service that can be had. With his customary generosity the Porto Rican will offer the use of his house for "los protestantes" even though he is not a believer. There are some distinct advantages to this plan —chiefly the intimate contact one gets with the people and their problems. In this balmy land the open air service is much used. It is inspiring to attend an evangelistic service conducted at some plantation on the large concrete drying floor.

In pioneer work such as this there is practically no physical equipment. It is a clear demonstration of the power of the simple Gospel. Some of the workers are using the stereopticon. This makes a forceful method of presenting religious truth, especially in the opening of new work.

Church membership in Porto Rico is a more direct severance from the former life than it it is in most places on the continent. In only a very few cases is it the result of a childhood where church and home have united to make church membership a natural step in the development of the individual. It is about as opposite a thing to the nominal adherence to the Catholic Church through infant baptism as could be imagined. The preparation for Protestant membership differs in forms as the denominations differ in creed and custom. All, however, agree in spirit. Churches with the Methodist form of government find their period of probation very effective in Porto

Rico. Other churches have their catechism classes which last from three to six months.

The influence of the evangelical churches is not confined to their members. There are on every hand those people who attend the services regularly, who call themselves Protestants but do not unite with the church. Taking these facts into consideration an estimate was made about a year ago based on an extensive survey. It gave Protestant population of Porto Rico as 12% of the entire population. This does not include such organizations as the Free Masons and Free Thinkers and a host of indifferents who, because of their anti-catholic attitude, are much more sympathetic with the Evangelical point of view than with the Roman Catholic.

The phase that has most encouraged the workers on the field and the contributing Boards and Societies has been the distinct advance made toward self-support by the different churches. Of course a church independent of outside financial support and direction has been the ideal ever since the work began.

Most of the stronger denominations have programs and schedules arranged that will render the present organized churches free from outside support in ten, fifteen, or twenty years. There will be a need for missionary work in Porto Rico for many generations to come but it is hoped, particularly by the native worker, that the central church will soon demonstrate its ability to conduct its own affairs.

One of the greatest aids to this end is the essentially patriotic spirit of the Porto Rican. "El Sostén Propio" —self support—has come to be the slogan at every denominational and interdenominational gathering.

Even before self-support is reached the Protestant Christians of Porto Rico are looking toward the service which they in turn hope to render to their less fortunate neighbors. For within a radius of 1,500 miles, lie the Central American States, and Hayti, Santo Domingo, Venezuela, Colombia and Brazil. Within these countries are literally millions of human beings whose need for education, health, and the inspiration of a vital religion is vast and urgent. These people are also Latins and the Porto Ricans for that reason have a unique opportunity as well as a responsibility to pass on to them in turn the blessings they have received from Protestant Missions. The number of calls for help is increasing as the years go by. The most insistent of these calls just now and the one that constitutes a veritable cry from Macedonia is from the little Republic of Santo Domingo. Since the American occupation of this Island Republic and the opening of American industries, Porto Ricans by the thousands have crossed the narrow Mona Channel to make their livelihood. A large number of members of the different evangelical churches were among the emigrants. These folk missed their church homes. At a big sugar center several of them organized a Protestant Church which is today fighting the fight of all infants for survival. It is appealing to the Protestant Churches of Porto Rico to help it in the struggle. And the Protestant Churches of Porto Rico are sending what aid they can in money and men. So it is that the Gospel is spread; so it is that the leaven of the Kingdom works.

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